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June 27, 2011

King County Growth Management Planning Council
Department of Development & Environmental Services
900 Oakesdale Ave. S.W.
Renton, WA 98057-5212

RE: Countywide Planning Policy Update

Dear Members of the Growth Management Planning Council:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the negative impacts of the proposed 2011 King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) on our local school district. The draft CPPs were released without consulting any of the school districts in King County. Changing the CPPs is not good public policy without an analysis of the impacts of the proposed policies on schools. The proposed changes would force schools to reverse acceptable and fiscally prudent decisions and force schools to pursue more costly efforts.

The current CPPs authorize public schools to be built in the rural area and authorize tightlines to public schools. The City of Maple Valley supports the current policies as the Tahoma School District's effort to adequately provide capital facilities to educate the growing number of children is a direct response to the State's Growth Management Act (GMA). The District owns one undeveloped school site in the rural area, adjacent to Tahoma Junior High School. The District's planning efforts envisioned building its next elementary school on this property to accommodate the future growth expected in our community. The draft CPPs raise significant questions about the District's ability to build this school to educate our children. We, the members of the Maple Valley City Council, are opposed to the proposed CPPs regarding schools and support Suburban City Association amendments to the CPPs regarding schools.

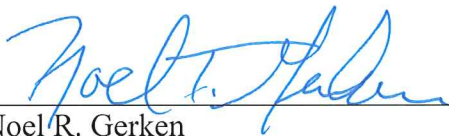
We recognize the importance of aligning the CPPs with the GMA, VISION 2040 and the implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy in limiting sprawl in our rural lands. The current policies are successful in practice, and are working well to reduce growth in the rural area. The last decade has seen the city of Maple Valley grow by 59%. Six of the eight schools in the Tahoma School District are located within the UGA and house 75% of district students.

Two schools are located outside the UGA. The proposed CPPs regarding schools would create a greater inequity in rural school facilities.

We have reviewed the June 21st letter sent to the GMPC by three unincorporated area councils, including the Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council. We disagree with the letter's allegation that schools would be "devastating to the local rural character". Schools are a critical part of our greater community's character. Our schools need to support the dense populations encouraged by GMA. Schools do not promote growth, they reflect growth. Schools should be sited where it can serve the student population in fiscally prudent ways to respond to the growth.

We ask that the Growth Management Planning Council restore the current CPPs regarding schools. Thank you.


Sincerely,



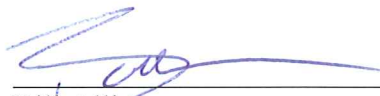
Noel R. Gerken
Mayor



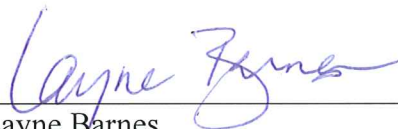
Victoria Laise Jonas
Deputy Mayor



Dana Parnello
Councilmember



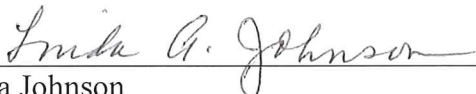
Bill Allison
Councilmember



Layne Barnes
Councilmember



Erin Weaver
Councilmember



Linda Johnson
Councilmember